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Reader's Report

Denis Barát, *sGra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*, An Early Sanskrit-Tibetan Glossary of Buddhist Terms. Bachelor's Thesis. Faculty of Arts, Charles university, 2022, 49 pp.

This thesis focuses on the translation regulations that were formed and applied for translating Buddhist texts into Tibetan from Sanskrit during 'the early diffusion of Buddhism' (*bstan pa snga dar*) in Tibet. The principal topics in this work are divided in two main chapters, the foundation of royal translation project and an introduction to the Sanskrit-Tibetan dictionary called *sGra sbyor bam po gnyis pa* which was a result of the very project.

In order to describe the royal translation project, the author sheds light on the historical process of translating Buddhist texts into Tibetan. It might be possible that earliest texts were translated from Chinese, but unfortunately, very little is known about that process. However, the historical royal-sponsored translation project was formed when Buddhism was adopted as a state religion in the second half of the eighth century. This project standardized the fixed Tibetan translations of the Sanskrit terminologies by the royal-approved translators, but the foundation of this translation is rooted in individual translation contributions.

The author credits Trisong Deutsen and others with forming this system. Therefore, it is revealed here that Songtsen Gampo was less influenced by Buddhism. It is also pointed out that the early period was the time of creating mythical foundations for portraying Tibet as a Buddhist land accompanied by accounts of semi-legendary narratives. On the other hand, it is also mentioned that the free translation of early period (*snga dar*) evolved into more mechanical translation of later period (*phyi dar*).

The main topic of this thesis is *sGra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*, a royal-approved lexicographical glossary which consists of more than four hundred Sanskrit terms. The Sanskrit title of this glossary is *Madhyavyutpatti* and translated as *Bye brag tu rtogs byed 'bring po* in Tibetan which means *Middle [length] repertory*. The author is well-aware of the various arguments from different sources for dating the glossary and other related texts.

In addition, the bachelor thesis discusses three important and inter-related topics characterizing the process of the royally approved translation. These concern:

1). *dKar chag*: catalogues keeping track of translated texts, which ended up with three versions, according to the places where they were compiled. Arguments for dating them and comparisons between two remaining catalogues are also mentioned in the thesis.



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2). *bKas bcad gsum*, 'three royal decrees' containing strict guidelines to control the translation process. It gives reasons for allowing certain genre of the texts to be translated and why others were not allowed.

3). *sKad gsar bcad*, known as 'great revision'. It prescribes substitutions and updates for old terms and grammatical features in order to revise all previously translated texts. This became a significant milestone in the royal translation project. As for the Bachelor thesis, these categories were described very well based on adequate references.

There are few minor things in the translation which could be discussed during the defense. For example, page no. 42; "*āṃgirasa zhes bya ba thog ma drang srong nyid kyi lus las byung bas na*" is translated as "*āṃgirasa* – The first *r̥ṣi* originated from himself, therefore it is explained as 'born [from] his own body'". From the grammatical point of view, 'the first *r̥ṣi*' would be 'drang srong thog ma', therefore, 'thog ma drang srong nyid' can be understand as 'in the beginning (or originally) *r̥ṣi* himself....' Having said that, it also depends on the concept of legend how to translate.

Concluding, I classify this thesis as very good one. I propose to grade it "excellent".

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